

From FAIR HOUSING & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL OF SOUTH ORANGE,
MAPLEWOOD, MILLBURN and SHORT HILLS

For immediate release.

For further information call:

Martin Bressler 762-0954

762-0940

231 Wyoming Avenue, Maplewood, N.J.

An emergency meeting called by the Fair Housing & Equal Opportunities Council of South Orange, Maplewood, Millburn and Short Hills, attended by thirty local residents, was held Sunday night to determine how the suburbs should respond to the difficult situation in Newark.

Martin Bressler, president of the Council, stated:

"It is easy for us in the suburbs to sit back and pontificate about the evils of violence and the failure of Negro leadership. It is quite clear, however, that frustration caused by lethargy and blindness on the part of the power structure is at the root of the ills.

"It is time that we in the suburbs rid ourselves of our 'splendid isolation' and open our eyes to the deplorable conditions existing just a few short miles from our manicured lawns. As residents of communities near Newark we must individually and collectively try to correct them."

The meeting resolved to increase the Council's community education program in order to counteract a white back-lash and to expand its liaison with a grass-roots community organization in a poverty area of Newark.

Mr. Bressler cited a number of steps which the Council agreed it would take immediately. They are:

1. To sponsor the donation of blood through the Essex County Blood Bank to replenish the supplies which have been severely depleted by the violence.
2. To offer to provide legal and medical emergency aid to the riot area as needed.
3. To urge local clergymen to speak affirmatively in support of programs and policies needed to eradicate the deep-rooted causes of the disturbances.
4. To call for a speedy Grand Jury investigation into the police action which precipitated the riots.
5. To support the establishment of a Civilian Police Review Board.

The Council further decided to accelerate its efforts to raise funds and provide materials and technical aid to Area Board #3 of the United Community Corporation (a grass-roots community organization covering the Clinton Hill area of Newark).

"Before the riots we offered to help Area Board #3 in any way we could," Mr. Bressler explained. "Specifically, we have committed ourselves to helping them establish a

community center in the heart of the riot-torn area. The crisis has pointed up how important this project is. Money, equipment and skills are needed to make the Center a reality by August 1st, the target date for the opening. We have also committed ourselves to provide money and equipment for a one week summer camp program in mid-August, sponsored by the Area Board."

Mr. Bressler concluded with a plea for community assistance:

"The Council recognizes that the problems of Newark do not end at the city line. We urge all local residents who share our concern to join us in the support of programs which are needed in Newark. Those wishing to pledge their aid should immediately call SO 2-0954 or write to the Council in care of P. O. Box 143, Maplewood."